

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (New) An apparatus for neutralizing organic alkaline wastewater by producing nitric acid ions by aerobic microorganisms, the apparatus comprising:

an ultrafilter membrane, a vinylidene chloride packing material, a pH meter and air supply means; and

wherein aerobic microorganisms are utilized in neutralizing the organic alkaline wastewater.

20. (New) The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the microorganism concentration within the apparatus is 10,000 ppm or higher.

21. (New) The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the ultrafilter membrane is a submerged membrane disposed in a water tank.

22. (New) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein a vinylidene chloride packing material and a guide are disposed below the submerged membrane, the

vinylidene chloride packing material guide is disposed on both outside extension lines of the submerged membrane and a diffusing pipe is disposed therebelow.

23. (New) The apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the vinylidene chloride packing material comprises a plurality of ring-shaped structures extending radially.

24. (New) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the apparatus also serves as a biological wastewater treatment apparatus.

25. (New) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein a diffusing pipe capable of automatically adjusting a discharge amount is provided below the submerged membrane.

26. (New) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein a dissolved oxygen meter is provided in the water tank.

27. (New) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein a diffusing pipe separate from a diffusing pipe below the submerged membrane is disposed below the vinylidene chloride packing material and the amount of air discharged from this separate diffusing pipe is interlocked with the pH meter.

28. (New) The apparatus according to claim 27, wherein a gas discharged from the separate diffusing pipe is a nitrogen gas.

29. (New) The apparatus according to claim 27, wherein treatment capacity of the submerged membrane is controlled by the amount of air discharged from the diffusing pipe disposed below the vinylidene chloride packing material.

30. (New) An apparatus for neutralizing organic alkaline wastewater by producing nitric acid ions by aerobic microorganisms, the apparatus comprising:

packing material comprising vinylidene chloride; and

wherein aerobic microorganisms are utilized along with at least the packing material comprising vinylidene chloride in neutralizing the organic alkaline wastewater.

31. (New) An apparatus for neutralizing alkaline wastewater by producing nitric acid ions by aerobic microorganisms, the apparatus comprising:

means for receiving alkaline wastewater with a pH of 12 or higher and comprising TMAH (tetramethylammonium hydroxide) including a nitrogen compound(s); and

means for neutralizing the alkaline wastewater at least by using aerobic microorganisms so that at least some of the TMAH is decomposed into nitric acid.

32. (New) The apparatus of claim 31, further comprising packing material comprising vinylidene chloride; and wherein aerobic microorganisms are utilized along with at least the packing material comprising vinylidene chloride in neutralizing the alkaline wastewater.

33. (New) An apparatus for neutralizing wastewater by producing nitric acid ions by aerobic microorganisms, the apparatus comprising:

a tank which receives both organic wastewater including nitrogen and inorganic alkaline wastewater so that the organic wastewater including nitrogen and inorganic alkaline wastewater are mixed in the tank and aerobic microorganisms are propagated for microbiologically producing nitric acid ions from organic matters thereby neutralizing the wastewater.

34. (New) The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the organic wastewater including nitrogen comprises an excessive domestic sludge slurry.